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The sixth in a series of teacher education units continues a discussion of specific problems faced by teachers of disadvantaged students. Stressed in this document are the teacher's role in working with the parents of these students. Also discussed are compensatory programs and those which use a curriculum content relevant to and derived from the cultural background of the disadvantaged. One section of the document focuses on such classroom management aspects as the classroom environment, student motivation, classroom procedures, discipline, and human relations. A summary, questions for discussion, and a bibliography are included. For other units in this series see UD 005 366, UD 005 367, UD 006 843, UD 006 842, UD 006 841, and UD 005 472. (NH)

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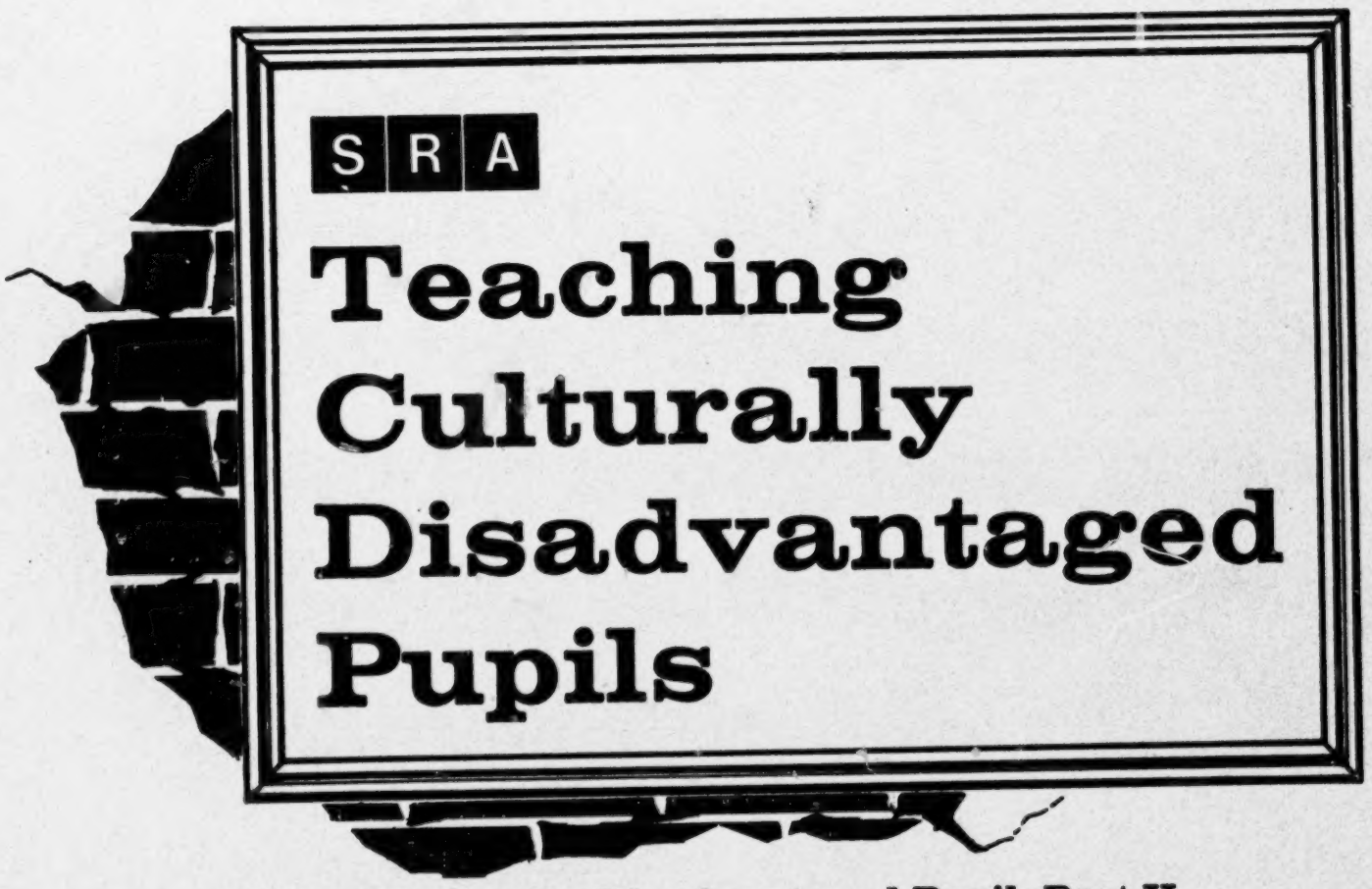

Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Pupil–Part II

UD 007 191

ONE-YEAR

SCHOOLWIDE PROJECT

GRADES K-12

By Kenneth R. Johnson

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Science Research Associates, Inc., 259 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 606

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TEACHING CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED PUPILS

(Grades K-12)

by

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Unit VI: Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Student--Part II

Sixth of Eight-Unit Series Appearing First of Each Month
From October 1, 1966, Through May 1, 1967

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PREFACE

One of the foremost challenges in American education today is that of educating the culturally disadvantaged pupils. To help them achieve in school, it is necessary for educators to understand them and their problems. This SRA extension service, Teaching Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils, for grades K to 12, is specifically designed to help teachers understand the culturally disadvantaged, to offer suggestions and techniques for teaching the culturally disadvantaged, to stimulate thought and promote discussion among teachers of the culturally disadvantaged, and to serve as a guide to the really valuable writing and research on the problem. For several years, SRA extension services have been used by thousands of educators as a framework and background resources for monthly in-service meetings, emphasizing study of problems related to classroom teaching.

This series, Teaching Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils, is being offered for the first time in 1966-67. Each monthly unit deals in a concise, nontechnical manner with one phase of the subject. While this extension service is primarily designed for use in in-service education meetings, its comprehensive coverage and many practical suggestions for regular classroom teaching can also be valuable for private study by individual educators.

The following units are included in this series for 1966-67:

UNIT ONE: The Culturally Disadvantaged Pupil--Part I (October)
UNIT TWO: The Culturally Disadvantaged Pupil--Part II (November)
UNIT THREE: The Culturally Disadvantaged Negro Student (December)
UNIT FOUR: Other Culturally Disadvantaged Groups (January)
UNIT FIVE: Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Student--Part I (February)
UNIT SIX: Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Student--Part II (March)
UNIT SEVEN: Improving Language Skills of the Culturally Disadvantaged (April)
UNIT EIGHT: Improving the Reading and Writing Skills of Culturally Disadvantaged Students (May)

The author of this series is Mr. Kenneth R. Johnson, Consultant, Division of Secondary Education, Los Angeles City School Districts, Los Angeles, California. For the past year he has specialized in the problem of educating the culturally disadvantaged, particularly the problems of teaching language and reading. He has conducted numerous institutes and lectures on the disadvantaged student at teacher workshops, conferences, and the colleges and universities in the Los Angeles area.

Born in a disadvantaged area of Chicago, the author worked in the post office for five years and served two years in the Army before attending college at Wilson Junior College, Chicago Teachers College, and the University of Chicago (B.A., M.A.). He has done graduate work at San Jose State

College, and is currently enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Southern California. All of his teaching experience has been in schools that had culturally disadvantaged populations.

We urge the school administrator or other educator receiving this extension service on Teaching Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils to assign to some one interested and competent person or committee in your school the responsibility for making the best use of each unit.

The booklets in this extension service will arrive about the first of each month, October through May. This issue contains Unit Six. We hope it will provide valuable help and practical information to those involved in education.

Dorothy Ericson
Project Editor

Paul T. Kosiak, Director
SRA Educational Services

March 1967

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UNIT SIX: TEACHING THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENT--PART II

PART I: INTRODUCTION

The emphasis in Unit Five was on identifying culturally disadvantaged pupils, significant questions for research, and ways teachers can increase their understanding of culturally disadvantaged pupils. Unit Five was a transition unit in changing the emphasis of this series from presenting background for understanding culturally disadvantaged pupils to applying understanding to specific problems of educating these pupils.

In this unit, the following topics are discussed: working with the parents of culturally disadvantaged pupils; organizing the classroom; suggestions on discipline; and human relations in the classroom. These topics are discussed in terms of the background and understanding of disadvantaged pupils derived from previous units.

PART II: WORKING WITH THE PARENTS OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED PUPILS

The Parents of Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils

The general characteristics of culturally disadvantaged pupils that limit their achievement were described in Unit Two and these general characteristics were amplified, extended, and added to in following units. In addition, characteristics of disadvantaged pupils from particular ethnic backgrounds were described in Units Three and Four. Disadvantaged pupils acquire these characteristics from their culture through learning--in other words, disadvantaged pupils are products of their culture. Specifically, these pupils are products of a particular kind of family because the family is the primary means of transmitting culture. Thus, culturally disadvantaged pupils are reflections of their parents. Whatever limiting characteristics they have are shared by their parents. For example, the general characteristics of culturally disadvantaged pupils include a different value system than the dominant culture, a poor self-concept, low aspiration and poor understanding of success, nonstandard English or a foreign language, etc. Their parents, necessarily, share these same characteristics.

This point may seem so obvious that it need not be mentioned. When one examines the ways the school and the teachers communicate and work with the parents of disadvantaged pupils, it is clear that the school and the teachers sometimes seem unaware that parents of culturally disadvantaged pupils operate on a different level and speak a different language than the school and teachers. In short, the parents of disadvantaged pupils are culturally disadvantaged. This point is not realized, or it is forgotten by some teachers. Other teachers seem to believe that cultural deprivation is a kind of immaturity of the pupils. Cultural deprivation is not exclusive to a particular age level--it is a handicap of a whole group of people who share a particular way of life. Thus, teachers and parents have different frames of reference when dealing with the same problem--they look at problems from different cultural perspectives. This often causes confusion, even conflict, when teachers and the parents of disadvantaged pupils meet. For example, the teacher who complains to a parent about a pupil fighting may be shocked when the parent lets the teacher know that there is nothing wrong with fighting and, indeed, the pupil was taught to fight when someone got out of line. This is an example of "culture shock" at the parent-teacher level.

The school can't possibly change all the characteristics of parents (specifically, change the parents) that keep them disadvantaged and affect the achievement of their children, because the task of changing the pupils is about all the school can handle (and the difficulties and curriculum limitations of changing the pupils has been pointed out repeatedly). Yet, many school districts are attempting the impossible task of changing

disadvantaged parents through programs that involve parents. Some districts are even trying to make disadvantaged parents into middle-class parents! A few of these programs are actually accomplishing the impossible with disadvantaged parents in adult and parent education programs. But the problem of completely changing disadvantaged parents--making them able to participate in the dominant culture--is probably so great that these programs can achieve only limited success. This does not mean that all programs should be abandoned, certainly not those programs that help parents get better jobs to increase their incomes. A better income can be one of the keys to unlock the entrance to the dominant culture. The limitations of these programs, however, must be recognized. These programs can't eliminate some of the causes or effects of cultural deprivation: an absent father can't be provided or returned to the home; the color of one's skin or one's ethnic background can't be changed; an entire value system can't be changed appreciably by attending a class one night a week; disadvantaged parents can't fill their experiential void and work, too; the welfare agency won't increase monthly payments; the landlord won't fix the hole in the roof.

The question that must be asked at this point is: if the pupils are products of their culture--specifically, products of their families--and if the school can't change the parents (eliminate their cultural deprivation), then how can the pupils be changed without changing the parents? The answer is: the school can influence the parents in those areas that directly pertain to the pupils' success in school (through parent education programs or school programs that involve parents). For example, the school can convince parents that education is important; the school can convince parents that regular attendance is necessary; the school can change parents' attitudes toward learning from apathy to excitement; the schools can make disadvantaged parents realize the cooperative role the school and parents share in helping pupils achieve academic success. The school can effect changes in these areas, and these are the areas the school should emphasize in parent education programs and school programs to involve parents. In those programs where disadvantaged parents have played a cooperative role in helping their children achieve academic success, these areas have been emphasized. In other words, these programs emphasized the changes that directly pertained to pupil success, and these changes were suggested in terms of how they would affect the pupils, not the parents. For example, many headstart programs around the country, and the remarkable Banneker School Program, didn't make disadvantaged parents into middle-class parents. What these programs did was to change the parents attitudes on, or made them aware of, things that directly affected their children's achievement.

The important points emphasized here are: parents of culturally disadvantaged pupils share the same characteristics that have been listed to describe the pupils; and the school and teachers must work with these parents within the framework of limitations these characteristics impose. Finally, the school should concentrate on changing those characteristics of the parents that negatively affect the achievement of the children. Furthermore, approaches used to effect change must be those which culturally disadvantaged parents will respond to.

Importance of Involving Parents

Although more research is needed in this area to determine the relationship between disadvantaged parents' attitudes toward school and their children's achievement (this question was discussed in the previous unit), experience tends to support the hypothesis that disadvantaged pupils do better in school when their parents have a positive attitude toward school, and when they are involved in school activities.

Attitudes of Disadvantaged Parents on Education and the School

In general, most disadvantaged parents feel that education is one of the means--probably, the surest means--that their children can have to improve their status. On the other hand, some disadvantaged parents are a negative influence on the achievement of their children. In other words, disadvantaged parents may have conflicting attitudes and act in conflicting ways regarding the education of their children.

Some disadvantaged parents look upon the school with suspicion and pessimism. This may be due to their own unpleasant experiences as pupils, or similar unpleasant experiences in dealing with the school on educating their children. Other disadvantaged parents feel that too much formal education--too much "book learning"--is bad for children (perhaps the educational gap that results in the difference of educational level between the parents and their children is threatening). The view that too much "book learning" is bad is prevalent among disadvantaged Appalachians.

Because literacy is a new phenomenon in many disadvantaged families, parents have a poor understanding of its significance in a modern society. This poor understanding of the significance of education may be due, in part, to the few positive examples of educated persons in the parents' environment or the few educated persons these parents know personally.

Most disadvantaged parents don't really have a basic understanding of the learning process. Too often, they view learning as some kind of magical process that occurs at school between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and they don't understand the supporting role they must play twenty-four hours a day to help their children learn (many are unable to play this supporting role, even if they did understand it).

Disadvantaged parents seldom make plans for the future of their children--the exigencies of daily living preclude planning for the future. Thus, the importance of education is not projected into the future. Instead, it is viewed in terms of the present (this present time orientation is consistent with the time orientation of their children). Education is not thought of as a continuum (unless vaguely), but as a daily activity

that children of certain ages must do. The failure to project the importance of education into the future is one of the things that prevents disadvantaged parents from developing attitudes and practices that support and sustain their children's efforts to achieve.

Finally, some disadvantaged parents who think of society as a battleground include the school in the enemy camp. These parents wage a kind of battle with the school, and their attitudes necessarily have a negative effect on their children.

The generalization can be made that most disadvantaged parents know that the school is an important factor in the lives of their children, in spite of the above. Even some of those parents who have the negative viewpoints listed above know this. In other words, disadvantaged parents look upon the school as a source of hope. Thus, with most disadvantaged parents the school already has a headstart in changing negative attitudes and actions or making the parents aware of those attitudes and actions that will help their children succeed. The school must help disadvantaged parents translate the aspirations and hopes they have for their children into attitudes and actions that will help the children fulfill these aspirations and hopes. To do this, the school must reach out to the culturally disadvantaged parents.

Involving Culturally Disadvantaged Parents

The ideal time to involve disadvantaged parents in school activities and interest them in the school program so that they can develop the attitudes and practices that support the effort of the school is at the kindergarten level. This is an ideal time for two reasons: first, if the parents can be influenced when their children start school, the tendency for disadvantaged pupils to fall farther and farther behind their middle-class peers may be arrested or diminished; secondly, disadvantaged parents, like all other parents, are enthused about their children beginning school. The school should capitalize on this enthusiasm by getting the parents involved at this point. If a good relationship with parents can be established right at the beginning of the pupils' school careers, perhaps this relationship can be sustained.

Some school districts have conducted programs for involving parents of entering kindergarten children. These programs are a sort of headstart program for parents. Some districts operate an orientation program to explain the cooperative role of school and parents in educating children. In these programs, parents are also taught the importance of answering their children's questions, talking to their children, pointing out things in their children's environment to stimulate interest and questions, taking their children on trips, etc. Of course, the things suggested must be possible for the parents within their limitations. In addition to pointing out the supplementary role that parents play, these programs inform the parents about those areas that are the parents' sole responsibility in

supporting the school's efforts (the importance of attending school regularly, the importance of showing interest in their children's progress, the necessity of visiting school and participating in school activities, the importance of providing an atmosphere for their children to study). School districts that conduct this kind of orientation program are more likely to influence the attitudes of parents than school districts that wait until registration day to meet disadvantaged parents. The cold, formal official process of registration is not a good beginning for establishing parent-school cooperation.

Establishing a positive relationship with parents of entering disadvantaged kindergarten children is aided by the natural enthusiasm the parents have about their children entering school. This relationship, however, should be sustained throughout the school career of the children. A good relationship should be established with those parents of older children, too. These parents may not have had a good relationship with the school before. Many school districts have started programs to sustain or initiate a good relationship and to change attitudes of the parents in those areas that directly influence achievement.

One of these types of programs involves a teacher or social worker whose job is to act as a liaison between the school and the home. This job is sometimes given the title of school-community coordinator or school-parent coordinator, or something similar. The coordinator visits the homes, handles any problems that arise between the school and parents, explains to the parents how they can participate in the school program, recruits parents for volunteer services, etc. Coordinators also visit community organizations, such as churches and clubs, to talk with parents about the school program and ways parents can support the program. Some coordinators even conduct parent education classes to help parents develop positive attitudes and practices that help their children. These classes are often held in the homes of parents, and the class is rotated among the parents enrolled in the class. Many of these programs are successful, and their success is probably due to the informal personal contact parents have with the school through the coordinator.

Often, the job of the coordinator is defined as it evolves. For example, in one Los Angeles high school the school community coordinator visited the home of a disadvantaged parent to find out why the parent could not go to the school to have a conference with a teacher. When the parent told the coordinator that she had nobody to babysit, the coordinator acted as a babysitter while the parent went to the school. Another time, this coordinator held a conference with a parent while the parent did the family washing in a neighborhood laundromat. The coordinator even pitched in and helped wash the clothes! The actions of this particular coordinator may seem unrelated to the achievement of the children of these parents; the warm friendly relationship growing out of the contacts this coordinator made with the two parents, however, puts the coordinator in the position to influence these two parents for the benefit of their children. The actions of this coordinator lets the parents know that the school is really interested in their children; the parents can be expected to equal this interest.

Another type of program that involves parents is one that teaches parents skills or gives parents help in particular areas where they need help. Most schools, particularly high schools, have facilities to conduct parent education classes in reading, home economics, automobile repair, industrial arts, etc. Many disadvantaged parents are interested in these areas or they need help in these areas. Becoming involved in learning makes disadvantaged parents understand the learning problems of their children. Some districts have tried conducting classes in connection with PTA meetings. This seems like a good way to draw disadvantaged parents into PTA activities because it combines the meetings with something concrete and immediately useful. One aspect of this type of program should be to influence parental attitudes on education. Maybe the parents and their children could attend these classes together. In addition, these classes should be held on Saturday. This is a much more convenient time for disadvantaged parents to participate.

Schools are islands populated by experts and rich in resources that sit in the middle of impoverished communities. These islands must be made attractive and accessible, so that disadvantaged parents will want to visit them. When they do, the school can give them something valuable; especially, the school can help disadvantaged parents develop positive attitudes on the education of their children.

The PTA has been the traditional way of involving parents in the school. The PTA has not, however, been very successful with most disadvantaged parents. In many schools having disadvantaged pupils, more teachers attend PTA meetings than parents. In addition, the parents who attend the meetings are those who need to be influenced least. If the PTA is to be effective, it must draw in many more disadvantaged parents than it normally does.

There are a number of reasons the PTA has not been effective with disadvantaged parents. First of all, the structure of the PTA with its formalized leadership, its committee system, and its complicated parliamentary procedures are contrary to the structure of the organizations composed of disadvantaged parents. For example, leadership usually emerges during the process of getting a job done. The ritualistic method of nominating and electing officers is contrary to the patterns of disadvantaged parents for establishing leadership. Also, in organizations composed of disadvantaged people, committee work is often replaced by a consensus for a small group to perform a particular job. Finally, parliamentary procedure is a complicated process for conducting meetings made up of middle-class parents--it is an almost impossible process to conduct meetings for disadvantaged parents. Instead, their meetings are usually conducted under the direction of a strong leader who has emerged from the group. Thus, the traditional structure of the PTA is contrary to the patterns of organization of disadvantaged parents.

Secondly, the PTA normally operates as if the parents and the school share the same attitudes and understanding on education. This is not necessarily true when working with disadvantaged parents. The school cannot assume that the parents share the same attitudes and understanding. Thus, the PTA should make room for including different attitudes and

provision for examining these attitudes. Too often, the structure and orientation of the PTA shuts off dissenting opinions, and these must be dealt with if the PTA hopes to alter these opinions and be effective. This is especially true with disadvantaged parents because of the great difference between their real situation and what the school believes their situation to be. In many cases, dissenting opinions point out where the PTA is missing the mark of effectiveness.

Another reason the PTA has failed with disadvantaged parents is that it is often controlled by "school people." That is, teachers, administrators, and parents who attempt to push a particular point of view without considering different points of view or different ways of solving problems that are based on different cultural patterns. The only point of view that really needs to be pressed is that the role of the PTA is to benefit children--then, let the parents go about trying to fill this role. Eventually, disadvantaged parents will seek help on how to fill the role, and when they do, the "school people" can influence attitudes.

Finally, the PTA has often been unsuccessful with disadvantaged parents because the meetings are held at inconvenient times. Disadvantaged parents normally travel long distances to jobs by more uncomfortable means of transportation than those in the dominant culture, and they work physically harder than middle-class parents. They are unwilling--physically and emotionally--to attend a meeting after a hard day of working. In addition, PTA meetings are often held at hours that are inconvenient for parents. A solution would be to hold the meetings on Saturday or Sunday. It would be interesting to see if this would increase attendance (assuming, of course, that other changes in the PTA were made along with this change).

In summary, the PTA has usually failed with disadvantaged parents because it has not changed to fit the experiences, patterns of behavior, and characteristics of disadvantaged parents. These are the same reasons the curriculum has failed with disadvantaged pupils.

One program that has been particularly successful in involving parents in school activities and changing the parents' attitudes on education is the Banneker District program. The Banneker District program, under the direction of Dr. Sam Shepard, was conducted in a disadvantaged Negro section of St. Louis, Missouri. The program is a comprehensive effort to improve the achievement of culturally disadvantaged Negro pupils, and it includes a component to involve the parents. In the Banneker District, teachers compiled a list of families sending children to school. Then, each family was visited by a teacher who had one of the children from the family in class. Because many of the families had more than one child in school, each teacher had fewer visits to make than the number of children in a class. During the home visits, the teachers stressed the importance for parents to develop those attitudes that support achievement that have been mentioned above. In addition, merchants in the district were encouraged to report truancy cases to the school; community organizations were visited and the importance of education to disadvantaged pupils and the role these organizations could play in helping pupils achieve was outlined. The remarkable thing about the Banneker District program is that it mobilized

the entire community behind the theme of the importance of education; and the community was mobilized by appealing to the population in terms it could understand.

Finally, other ways to bring disadvantaged parents into the school are through assembly programs, open house programs, exhibits, and extra curricular activities. All of these ways afford personal contact and communication between teachers and parents.

Communicating with Disadvantaged Parents

The most common means the school uses for communicating with parents are notes and bulletins. Many disadvantaged parents are, like their children, linguistically handicapped and they are poor readers. Thus, many disadvantaged parents have difficulty understanding written communications from the school. A better way to communicate with these parents is by personal contact, either visiting their homes or telephoning them. Personal contact is consistent with the patterns for communication of disadvantaged people. On the other hand, personal contact or telephone calls are inefficient. Schools simply can't make a personal contact every time communicating with parents is necessary. Making personal contact by telephone is time consuming and it is difficult, because so many disadvantaged parents do not have telephones; and home visits must be made after school hours. Communication by notes and bulletins is unavoidable because of the many routine communications that are necessary. Notes and bulletins should be written in clear, simple language, and they should not contain too many items. For communications on important matters, such as behavioral problems or the achievement of a pupil, personal contact through school visits by the parent or home visit by the teacher is better.

The difficulty of communicating with parents by notes and bulletins points out a particular area where disadvantaged parents are often confused, and that area is in communicating pupil achievement. Usually, achievement is communicated by a report card. The language of the report card is not the language of disadvantaged parents, and they do not understand clearly what the school is trying to tell them about their children. Almost all school districts use the same form, or report card, throughout the district for reporting pupil achievement to disadvantaged parents and middle-class parents. Instead of using a standard report card for all parents, school districts should design one that can be easily understood by disadvantaged parents. These parents must understand the report of achievement if they are expected to help their children progress. A better way to report achievement of pupils is in a conference between the parent and teacher. During a conference, the achievement of the pupil can be clearly communicated. In addition, a conference at report card time is an ideal way to meet with parents in order to obtain their cooperation.

Parents' Visits to School

The only time many disadvantaged parents visit the school is when problems arise. This is unfortunate, because school visits become associated with problems. During these visits disadvantaged parents are fearful, suspicious, and defensive. Not much constructive progress can be made with parents who feel this way. Thus, it is important for parents and school to establish a cooperative working relationship, so that when problems do arise, fear and suspicion won't handicap efforts to solve the problems.

The physical environment of the school is a source of discomfort to many disadvantaged parents. Parents usually report to the main office when visiting school. In the main office, they are confronted with a counter, files, switchboard, office sounds, clerks--in short, disadvantaged parents encounter the same kind of cold, official atmosphere of other places of authority that may be associated with unpleasant experiences (welfare office, unemployment compensation office, police station, finance office, rent collecting office, etc.). Through a kind of stimulus generalization, some disadvantaged parents expect an unpleasant experience when they visit school. Schools located in disadvantaged communities should have a room that does not reflect "officialdom" where parents are received and conferences are held.

When conferring with a parent on problems, teachers should always try to say something positive about the parent's child. It is especially important to conclude the conference on a positive note--that is, don't end the conference with the focus on the difficulty the problem might have caused; instead, end the conference with a positive statement about the pupil and the benefit the conference should have on the achievement of the pupil.

Conferences with disadvantaged parents should be conducted as informally as possible, and as personably as possible. Disadvantaged parents respond in this kind of context much more positively than in a formal structured conference.

Another cause of difficulty when disadvantaged parents visit school is a double-barreled one: it is the stereotype many teachers have of the parents and the stereotype the parents have of the teachers. Some teachers think of disadvantaged parents as if the parents are stupid, worthless human beings; other teachers act so superior in the presence of disadvantaged parents that the parents' feelings of inferiority (which are a natural result of their deprivation) are increased. Some specific ways teachers can communicate a negative stereotype of disadvantaged parents are through rudeness, curtness, the use of a vocabulary that is too difficult for the parents to understand, and a lack of interest or consideration for what the parents have to say. On the other hand, some disadvantaged parents think of teachers as haughty, snobbish people who are too good to talk to them.

Both teachers and parents, unfortunately and inadvertently, reinforce the stereotypes each has of the other. Teachers may reinforce the stereotype by not being able to operate on a level with disadvantaged parents that let the parents know that the teacher is talking to another human being who is equal; disadvantaged parents may reinforce the stereotype by not being able to communicate in standard English (their efforts to use standard English amplify their linguistic deprivation and make them appear stupid) or by not being able to understand the topic being discussed.

The language teachers use when conferring with disadvantaged parents is especially important. It's obvious that communication is impossible if the language level is above the comprehension of the parents. Teachers should speak to disadvantaged parents in simple, clear informal English. But teachers should not be condescending in their choice of language level. Disadvantaged parents, on their part, are likely to try to use standard English when talking to teachers and their attempts (to use standard English) are likely to handicap their efforts to communicate. Teachers have to be patient and avoid correcting the parents either explicitly or through implication. If the conference is relaxed and informal, the ability of the parents to communicate will increase as the conference progresses.

Disadvantaged parents who speak a foreign language present a compounded difficulty. Conferences with these parents require an interpreter, and this third party may prevent informality.

Other subtle ways teachers and parents reinforce each other's stereotypes are through the differences of each in clothes and grooming, socio-economic class, attitude on education, and base of power (the teacher is supported by the legal power of the state, the disadvantaged parent is dominated by the power of the state--the disadvantaged parent is powerless). These stereotypes that teachers and disadvantaged parents have for each other are unfortunate because they prevent communication in solving problems. These stereotypes disappear (as stereotypes often do) when teachers and parents work together <u>cooperatively</u> in the common interest of educating children. This is why it is so important for schools to establish programs in which cooperation bonds between teachers and parents can be established.

Conflict between school and parents is often created by parents not making requested visits. Disadvantaged parents are unable to make visits to the school because of a variety of reasons. Among these reasons are: lack of carfare, no babysitter, no decent clothing, fear of dealing with authority figures, and inability to visit school during school hours. The failure to honor requests to visit reinforces the stereotype that teachers may have of disadvantaged parents, or it implies that disadvantaged parents are uninterested in their children. Unfortunately, some aren't--but many are. Because of the difficulty of many disadvantaged parents to make school visits, some educators recommend that teachers visit disadvantaged parents in their homes whenever a conference with them is necessary.

Visiting the Homes of Parents

Teachers should always notify parents before visiting them in their homes. Notification should be in the form of requesting permission to visit the home, and not an announcement of intention to visit the home. Besides being the polite thing to do, notifying parents prior to a visit gives parents an opportunity to prepare for the teacher's visit. Notification also gives the parent a choice of either conferring with the teacher in the home, or visiting the school to confer with the teacher (when requesting permission to visit the home, teachers should always give the parents the choice of conferring in the home or school). Disadvantaged parents may be ashamed of their living conditions, and when they realize that the teacher intends to see them, they will often choose to see the teacher at school.

The general rules for conferring with parents are the same for home or school conferences. In addition, teachers should observe the following rules that are really just common sense: teachers should try not to appear shocked over the living conditions; home visits should not last longer than necessary; the teacher who visits the homes of disadvantaged parents should not refuse any extension of hospitality, no matter how meager (a cup of coffee, tea, a piece of cake, etc.)--a refusal indicates superiority, not politeness, and reinforces the stereotype disadvantaged parents may have of teachers (on the other hand, the neglect of disadvantaged parents to offer hospitality probably means that they are unable to or that they do not know middle-class courtesy patterns); female teachers should not overdress when visiting the homes of disadvantaged parents. Above all, teachers should let the parents know that a home visit was made for the benefit of the child, and not to pressure the parent to get the child "off the teachers back."

Summary

Throughout this section on working with disadvantaged parents, the assumption has been that a close relationship between the school and disadvantaged parents is necessary.

Other emphases in this section have been: the school should concentrate on influencing the attitudes of disadvantaged parents in those areas that directly pertain to school achievement; and the school must appeal to disadvantaged parents in ways that are not in conflict with the culture of deprivation. Finally, the overall emphasis of this section has been that the parents of culturally disadvantaged pupils are also culturally disadvantaged.

PART III: PROGRAMS FOR CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED PUPILS

It was pointed out in Unit One that prior to 1960, educators seemed barely aware of the problem of educating culturally disadvantaged pupils. The ratio of culturally disadvantaged pupils in American schools probably has remained about the same over the years. These pupils just didn't emerge during the postwar years--they have always been with us; however, the number of culturally disadvantaged pupils has increased, and educating these pupils is now one of the major problems of American education.

There are a number of reasons that help explain the increased awareness of and concern for the problem. First of all, the growing population of culturally disadvantaged pupils magnifies their problem beyond the point that it can be ignored, dismissed, or hidden. Before World War II, the culturally disadvantaged population was dispersed throughout the general population or isolated in pockets of poverty. Further, the Great Depression of the 1930s covered most of the population with a cloud of poverty and hardship, and, in the economic fog, the culturally disadvantaged could not be distinguished from the temporarily poor. When sunshine returned for the general population, however, the culturally disadvantaged remained under the cloud of poverty. One area where they did make hay even though the sun shined for others was in population growth--their birthrate has been higher than the birthrate of the general population during recent years. Thus, the number of culturally disadvantaged pupils in our schools has increased significantly.

The growing concentration of the culturally disadvantaged in the big cities and the social and economic problems resulting from their concentration is a second reason that caused our society to turn to education for help in solving the total problem of the culturally disadvantaged.

Third, the plight of the culturally disadvantaged has aroused the concern of all responsible people who want to see the American dream become reality for all.

Finally, as the curriculum of the American school changed to fit the general population (increasingly middle-class in nature) and to meet the increasingly complex needs of a complex society, it became more and more unsuitable for culturally disadvantaged pupils and they fell farther and farther behind in achievement. Thus, their nonachievement focused the attention of educators on the problem. To meet the problem, educators began to devise new programs (new curricula) to help culturally disadvantaged pupils achieve.

These programs are basically two types: compensatory programs, and programs that utilize content, materials, and methods based on the cultural background of the pupils. Both types of programs are usually called compensatory education, and both have the same purpose--to improve the achievement of culturally disadvantaged pupils. There is a distinction between the two, however.

Compensatory education is literally those education programs that compensate for or make up for shortcomings and deficiencies in the pupils' background that prevent them from achieving. In other words, compensatory education attempts to give culturally disadvantaged pupils those necessary experiences for achievement that middle-class children normally derive from their cultural background. The lack of these experiences penalizes culturally disadvantaged pupils because the school curriculum is based on the expectation of these experiences. Programs like Headstart, or the programs that are enrichment in nature (field trips, after school and Saturday programs) are examples of compensatory education programs.

The second type of program uses the cultural background of disadvantaged pupils as a take-off point for instruction. These programs include content that is interesting to disadvantaged pupils. For example, these programs may include a study of social problems relevant to disadvantaged pupils; disadvantaged Negro pupils may study the Negro's role in American history. These programs also include materials that are appropriate to disadvantaged pupils' backgrounds. For example, the new elementary readers that include story characters in a mid-city setting are attempts to adapt instructional materials to the background of disadvantaged pupils; the high-interest books written in language that approximates the language of disadvantaged pupils are other attempts. Finally, these programs use methods and techniques that are adapted to the cultural background and learning style of culturally disadvantaged pupils. For example, many of these programs have smaller classes and staggered schedules; some of these programs include extensive counseling components; other techniques include stressing physical involvement in learning, permitting pupils to use their native language (foreign or nonstandard dialect) without fear of being told that it's "wrong," and motivational procedures appropriate to disadvantaged pupils.

Of course, a sharp distinction can't be made between compensatory education programs and education programs based on the cultural background of disadvantaged pupils. Each necessarily has some of the other in it: compensatory programs must employ content, materials, and methods that are effective with disadvantaged pupils, and programs based on the backgrounds of disadvantaged pupils must compensate for the pupils' lack of experiences. The distinction depends on the emphasis of the program, but the distinction is real.

The programs designed for culturally disadvantaged pupils, whether they are compensatory or based on pupils' backgrounds, should differ from programs for middle-class pupils in <u>structure</u> and <u>approach</u>, but not in goals. Programs for both groups of pupils must be designed to help pupils

attain the general objectives of education. Each group--middle-class pupils and culturally disadvantaged pupils--has some specific objectives that are formulated on the basis of its particular situation, but the overall general objectives of education are the same for both groups. This point is emphasized because some educators think that different general objectives of education are needed for disadvantaged pupils. It was pointed out in Unit One that James B. Conant implies this kind of erroneous recommendation in his book Slums and Suburbs. The confusion about objectives may be caused by the inability of disadvantaged pupils to attain the objectives through regular programs. That is, educators note that disadvantaged pupils have difficulty attaining objectives through the regular curriculum and instead of changing just the curriculum, both objectives and curriculum are changed. Furthermore, the order of change seems to be curriculum first, then objectives--and this is opposite of what it should be, because this order results in the content and materials setting objectives. Different programs for disadvantaged pupils do not mean different objectives of education.

Education objectives are behavioral changes in particular areas. For example, a general objective of American education is to understand and appreciate the democratic form of government (different school districts state this objective in different ways, but the essential meaning is universal). The behavioral change contained in this objective is to "understand and appreciate"; the area this behavior applies to is "democratic form of government." A basic task of educators is to organize sequential activities appropriate for the pupils that will give them the experiences to attain the objective. Often, these activities are contained in the framework of subjects and units, and particular activities (the curriculum) that are likely to produce the desired behavioral changes in the area stated in the objective. Roughly, this is what the curriculum is. Culturally disadvantaged pupils have difficulty attaining the objectives of education (achieving) because the subjects, units, and activities (curriculum) are not appropriate for them. In other words, the curriculum is based on the interests, experiences, and nature of middle-class pupils. Thus, new curricula are needed for culturally disadvantaged pupils. Specifically, new programs of education must be designed that will permit them to attain the objectives of education. However, programs designed for them must be aimed at helping them attain the same general objectives as other pupils. Too often the programs designed for culturally disadvantaged pupils state or imply changed or "diluted" objectives. This serious error in curriculum construction is the result of educators thinking that there is only one way for pupils to attain the objectives, and this simply isn't true. There is always more than one way to skin a cat. Thus, subjects, units, and activities that are appropriate for culturally disadvantaged pupils (based on their interests, experiences, needs) and that give them the experiences to attain the objectives of education, must be designed.

An interesting exercise for teachers is to examine the programs in their schools for disadvantaged pupils and then look at the objectives of the total school program. During this exercise teachers should ask

themselves: "Do these programs really lead to these objectives?" If the answer is "No" then new programs are needed which elevate students, not lower goals. And the programs designed for disadvantaged pupils will differ in structure and approach from programs designed for middle-class pupils, not in objectives (or goals). This doesn't mean that programs for disadvantaged pupils should not contain specific objectives that are dictated by the conditions or the reality of deprivation. The attainment of these objectives are necessary before the higher, more general and universal objectives of education can be attained. For example, disadvantaged pupils should learn how to survive in their environment, how to improve themselves, and how to escape the clutches of all the destructive forces in a slum environment. But these objectives are intermediate objectives, not the ends of education. If they become ends, disadvantaged pupils will remain outside the dominant culture. Again the following must be restated: if the basic needs of culturally disadvantaged pupils go unsatisfied, neither intermediate nor end objectives will be attained.

The need for establishing new programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils presents both new challenges and new burdens on America's schools. To initiate the kinds of programs that are effective for disadvantaged pupils, new teachers, additional training of teachers, new materials, equipment, and buildings are needed. All of these require more money, and a lack of money is one general characteristic most school districts share with disadvantaged pupils. Fortunately, additional funds have been allotted to districts for the purpose of initiating programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils. The most significant new funds have come from the federal government with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965.

The Role of the Federal Government

The federal government traditionally has entered local and state problems when problems have become a national concern and/or local and state resources could not adequately deal with problems. Educating culturally disadvantaged pupils is one of the problems that has drawn federal response.

The importance of education was outlined by President Johnson in a speech given July 28, 1964. In the speech the president stated: "If we are learning anything from our experiences, we are learning that it is time for us to go to work, and the first work of these times and the first work of our society is education." President Johnson took the leadership in getting the most significant education bill in our country's history--the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Although the Act covers other aspects of education, the education of culturally disadvantaged pupils is the main emphasis of the Act.

The urgency of the need for the funds provided by the Act is reflected in the short time it took from its introduction in Congress to its enactment. Committee hearings were held, congressional debates were held, final passage was accomplished and the president's signature was affixed to the act in less than four months!

The Act authorized over $1,300,000,000 in federal funds for educational purposes. The largest authorization of funds ($1,060,000,000) was contained in Title I of the Act. The purpose of Title is to strenghthen elementary and secondary education for impoverished youth. Many of the programs for educating culturally disadvantaged pupils would not be possible without the federal funds provided by the Act.

Other sections of the Act provide funds for: additional textbooks, library books and instructional materials (Title II); supplementary educational centers that provide specialized services (Title III); research (Title IV); and support of state departments of education.

The federal government has also authorized funds in other acts to finance educational programs for culturally disadvantaged youth. Some of these programs are Headstart, the Job Corps, and the Neighborhood Youth Corps.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, however, is the most important and extensive effort of the federal government to help with the problem of educating culturally disadvantaged.

Programs for the Culturally Disadvantaged

The two basic types of programs most commonly in operation for culturally disadvantaged pupils have been pointed out--compensatory programs and programs utilizing content, materials, and methods appropriate for disadvantaged pupils. Most programs are a combination of the two, reflecting the characteristics of one more than the other. A list of the kinds of programs that have been designed for culturally disadvantaged pupils can be found in "A Schoolman's Guide to Federal Aid," School Management (June 1965) pages 94-164 by Buckman Osborne. The programs have been grouped under specific categories (the first category, "Educational Personnel," pertains directly to teachers of disadvantaged pupils rather than the pupils--thus, these programs are not strictly compensatory programs or programs based on the backgrounds of disadvantaged pupils). Most of the programs in the list reflect structure only, and not approach (this can be inferred, often, from the structure). The approach taken is dictated by the nature of disadvantaged pupils (general characteristics, learning style, specific needs, interest, etc.). Specific approaches have been suggested throughout this series; other approaches will be discussed in Part IV, "Classroom Management" and Units Seven and Eight. Schools often place too much emphasis on structure and neglect to adequately consider approach when designing programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils (criticism on this point will be presented below).

Programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils often include more than one component. That is, one program may be made up of two, three, or more of the programs listed above. For example, a program may include special reading classes, field trips, and counseling services; or a program may combine school-home coordinators, counseling services, and health services.

One example of program that combines components to form a concerted, coordinated effort to help culturally disadvantaged pupils is the Student Achievement Center program conducted by the Los Angeles City Schools for disadvantaged pupils in junior and senior high schools. This program also combines the two basic program types: that is, compensatory education and content materials and methods appropriate for disadvantaged pupils.

The core of the Student Achievement Centers is reading. Pupils are selected to enter each center on the basis of their reading scores. Pupils who are poor readers (four or more years retardation) are programed into basic reading classes that have a maximum enrollment of twelve; pupils whose reading scores are less than four years below their reading level expectancy are programed into reading improvement classes that have a maximum enrollment of fifteen. In addition, all pupils are enrolled in social studies, math, and science classes that place equal emphasis on reading as content for these courses. Basic reading skills (phonetic and structural word attack, vocabulary building, comprehension skills, etc.) taught in the reading classes are reinforced in the social studies, math, and science classes. Maximum enrollment in these classes is twenty-five pupils.

The teachers in the Student Achievement Centers have received intensive in-service training in the teaching of reading. Teachers of social studies, math, and science classes are given specialized training in how to reinforce basic reading skills in their classes. Every teacher receives a six-week workshop in methods of teaching reading to culturally disadvantaged pupils. In the workshops, teachers are taught the methods of teaching reading that appeal to disadvantaged pupils, diagnostic techniques, use of special equipment and materials, and grouping techniques. Thus, the pupils are assured of a massive teaching effort to help them improve their reading skills.

Each classroom in the Student Achievement Centers is equipped with a variety of equipment to aid instruction: tape recorders, overhead projectors, tachistoscopes, reading pacers, etc. In addition, each classroom has a wide variety of textbooks, reading kits, and other reading aids that offer as wide and varied types of materials to teach reading as are available. Each classroom also includes many supplementary books in small sets that appeal to many interest areas. Finally, the content of the social studies, math, and science classes has been changed to fit particular interests and needs of disadvantaged pupils.

Teachers in the Student Achievement Centers are given clerical help to assist them in clerical and other nonteaching duties. The extra clerical help increases the time teachers can work directly with pupils.

Counseling is another component of the Student Achievement Center. Attached to each Student Achievement Center are counselors who work with pupils enrolled in the center to help them solve emotional and social problems that are detrimental to learning. Attached to each Center is a school-home coordinator who works closely with parents on problems that may hinder learning.

The reading centered curriculum of the Student Achievement Center is a curriculum based on the needs and backgrounds of disadvantaged pupils. Another component of the Student Achievement Centers is compensatory in nature. This component offers extended day and Saturday classes for enrichment. In these classes, pupils are able to take enrichment classes in any area that interests them. Classes are offered in such areas as music, art, industrial arts, dancing, computer math, literature appreciation, etc. Finally, each Student Achievement Center is allotted many hours on Saturday for scheduled field trips (some field trips are conducted on weekdays, also). Pupils are taken on trips to cultural centers, industries, concerts, exhibits, etc., and other places that supplement learning. In summary, the Student Achievement Center program of the Los Angeles City Schools is an attempt to help disadvantaged pupils achieve in school by utilizing many approaches to help them overcome the handicap of a disadvantaged background.

A program for culturally disadvantaged pupils that has received national acclaim for its remarkable success is the Banneker School Project in St. Louis, Missouri. The program was founded and is directed by Dr. Samuel Shepard, a Negro educator who refused to accept failure as a necessary product of deprivation. The Banneker School District is located in one of the poorest sections of St. Louis. The area has the highest crime rate in the city, the greatest poverty, the most ramshackled housing--in other words, it's a real slum. The area is populated by Negroes.

One of the first things Dr. Shepard did was to involve the parents of the children in the district. Every parent in the district was visited by teachers from the schools. During these home visits, parents were urged to support the schools in their efforts to educate pupils, the importance of education as a means for a better life was pointed out, and parents were encouraged to take a "pledge of cooperation." This pledge required parents (1) to send their children to school every day on time; (2) to provide the space and atmosphere in the home for their children to do homework; (3) to keep behind their children to do the homework (parents were kept informed of homework assignments); (4) to constantly remind their children of the importance of education. This pledge was tacked up in the kitchen, or some other prominent place in the home, where it always could be seen.

In the beginning, Dr. Shepard spoke night after night throughout the district hammering away on the disadvantaged position of Negroes in American society and the importance of education in changing this position. He also persuaded parents and pupils to develop pride and the belief that achievement was possible--in other words, he worked on developing a positive self-concept of the population. Dr. Shepard continued his personal speaking tour throughout the district; in addition, he invited other speakers--especially successful Negroes who had made it out of the slums--to speak on the same topic. Little by little, the parents were won over. Then they were organized in the PTA of the schools, and their new enthusiasm for education was sustained.

The teachers in the Banneker District were given intensive in-service training on ways to teach the pupils. Ways to motivate the pupils were

particularly stressed in the in-service training. Teachers were urged to quit looking at the IQ of the pupils and to make the pupils stretch to meet the content.

The pupils were informed of their exact achievement levels in reference to grade norms in each subject matter. The reality of nonachievement was faced! And the pupils were urged by teachers and parents to get busy and close the gap.

Once the program got rolling, it was propelled by the new force of motivation. Pupils were given many enrichment experiences, such as field trips and cultural trips, to fill in their experiential gaps.

The success of the Banneker District program is due to a surprisingly simple reason: Dr. Sam Shepard put all his eggs in a basket labeled motivation and hatched achievement. The significance of his effort is that teachers, parents, and pupils were motivated, and this triad of motivation made nonachievement virtually impossible.

The success of the program is remarkable. In the 1957-58 school year, 47 percent of the Banneker District pupils were below average; today, a little over 10 percent of the pupils are below average. In the 1957-58 school year, only 10 percent of the Banneker District pupils were in the top group of achievement; today, over 20 percent of the pupils are in the top group. Attendance climbed above 90 percent. The pupils who accomplished this remarkable record are from almost the same environment that produced pupils who scored abysmally low on national tests prior to the program. Only one thing changed in the environment--attitude. Perhaps this is the important ingredient in any program for culturally disadvantaged pupils.

The two programs summarized, the Student Achievement Center program in Los Angeles, California, and the Banneker District program in St. Louis, Missouri, are examples of programs that combine both compensatory education and education based on the cultural background of the pupils. The two programs differ, however, in the emphasis placed on structure and approach. The Los Angeles program emphasized structure, while the St. Louis program emphasized approach. The emphasis on approach seems most significant because its effects are necessary for achievement regardless of structure. Many programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils neglect to adequately consider approach. In fact, if culturally disadvantaged pupils can be taught to believe that they can achieve, to develop pride in themselves, and to recognize the importance of achievement they can probably achieve within the structure of the regular curriculum. After all, the regular structure of the curriculum is not too meaningful to middle-class pupils, and most of them achieve. The greatest gains with culturally disadvantaged pupils, however, are probably realized in programs that alter structure and approach to fit their backgrounds, needs, and learning style.

Only two programs have been summarized and these summaries were included to illustrate some general principles of organizing programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils. For summaries of additional programs, see: Compensatory Education for the Disadvantaged, by Edmund W. Gordon and Doxey A. Wilkerson (Princeton, N.J.: College Entrance Examination Board, 1966).

Setting Up Programs for Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils--Some Considerations

Some of the things to consider when organizing programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils have already been discussed. For example, the overall school objectives for other pupils. The structure and approach of programs for disadvantaged pupils must be appropriate to their backgrounds, needs, and learning style in terms of content, materials, and methods. Finally, the distinction between programs for slow learners and programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils must be clear. There are other considerations.

Often, school districts look to other districts for examples of programs. Many of these programs look good on paper, and many are good in practice. Some of the programs that look good on paper, however, have not been adequately evaluated to determine their effectiveness. Thus, before duplicating or adapting a program of another district, the program should be examined to determine if it has been adequately evaluated. Because of the sudden increase in the number and the short duration of programs for the disadvantaged, many have not received adequate evaluations.

Secondly, educators must be careful not to design programs or adopt approaches that make disadvantaged pupils adjust to deprivation or become satisfied with the culture of deprivation. Programs should make disadvantaged pupils (especially at the secondary level) unsatisfied with their conditions. Satisfaction with deprivation erodes aspirations, and higher aspirations are necessary to escape deprivation. One of the outstanding features of the Banneker District program is that it did not permit the pupils to accept their roles in social tragedy.

On the other hand, programs must not be so high above the pupils that they fail to touch disadvantaged pupils. Many of the "cultural" programs are examples of out-of-touch programs. For example, many districts take disadvantaged pupils to hear symphony concerts or opera. This kind of music requires a sophistication not possessed by many middle-class adults.

Still, educators must be careful not to give disadvantaged pupils the same old stuff. The past experiences of failure cry for change. Change, however, must be based on an understanding of culturally disadvantaged pupils.

Finally, educators must be careful not to place too much importance on gimmicks--whether they are scheduling gimmicks, new kinds of teaching machines, or elaborate audiovisual machines and aids--to raise achievement of culturally disadvantaged pupils. The most important component in any program is the classroom teacher. All the gimmicks in the world cannot raise achievement by themselves.

PART IV: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Throughout this series, the main focus has been outside the classroom. These "outside" factors are significant, because they directly affect classroom learning. Thus, teachers must understand these factors to be effective. The teaching-learning situation, however, is carried on inside a classroom by one classroom teacher working with a group of culturally disadvantaged pupils. This section will emphasize ways of working with culturally disadvantaged pupils in the classroom. In the slang of the Negro ghetto, we are "right down to the nitty-gritty."

The first job of the classroom teacher is to determine the achievement level of the pupils in the class. In other words, the first job of the classroom teacher is diagnostic and no effective instruction can be carried on until this job is completed. The teacher must find out what the pupils know, and build on that. Part of the diagnosis can be done by informal methods. For example, having each pupil read orally to the teacher gives a rough estimate of reading ability; a simple composition or one paragraph can reveal spelling and writing deficiencies; a short discussion can reveal language deficiencies. Formal methods of diagnosing pupils' needs should also be used. There are special diagnostic tests that can be administered. The real value of these tests is that they catalog the deficiencies of disadvantaged pupils. The composite score really gives little direction for instruction. In addition, teachers should go to the school records of each pupil (cumulative and health records) to determine pupil needs. Also, teachers can question previous teachers and other school personnel about the pupils. Often this is the most effective diagnostic procedure. Finally, a comprehensive understanding of culturally disadvantaged pupils (their way of life, their general characteristics, their learning style, etc.) is a kind of diagnosis and it gives direction to teaching.

Classroom Environment

The classroom for culturally disadvantaged pupils should be made as pleasant as possible. Often the schools they attend are the older schools in the district and beautification is difficult. Still, the classroom can be the most pleasant aspect of the physical environment of many disadvantaged pupils. The importance of orderliness has been mentioned in a previous unit. In addition, teachers should make an effort to hang up pretty pictures, construct eye-catching bulletin boards, and place a few plants in the classroom. Brightly colored curtains for the windows in place of the usual institutional shades can make a big improvement and give the classroom a simple elegance disadvantaged homes often lack. Elementary teachers

seem to be more conscious of beautifying the classroom than secondary teachers. In fact, there seems to be an inverse relationship between grade level and beautification--as the grade increases, beautification decreases. A pleasant classroom environment is just as important for secondary pupils.

In elementary classrooms, especially those of the primary grades, teachers should label many of the items. Labels can be made of tag board or some other stiff durable paper and printed in large letters. These labels help the pupils become familiar with writing and they increase sight vocabulary. A good exercise for elementary pupils is to remove the labels at the end of the day by telling a pupil to remove the label of the c-h-a-l-k-b-o-a-r-d (spelling the word requires the pupil to discriminate between letters). The following morning, a pupil can be given a label and told to place it on the corresponding object (this requires the pupil to read the word).

A classroom library is another important component of the classroom of disadvantaged pupils. The classroom library doesn't have to be elaborate--just a bookcase or table tucked in a corner of the classroom. Pupils should be permitted to visit the library corner in their spare time. The library can be stocked with regular books obtained from the central school library; in addition, teachers can include their old magazines, which otherwise are often discarded. But they can be extremely valuable, especially for older pupils, because they may be the only magazines available to the pupils. Even the newspaper can be included for the same reason (it doesn't matter if it is a day or two old).

The classroom environment for culturally disadvantaged pupils should be conducive to learning. That is, the classroom should be pleasant, stimulating, orderly, and beautiful--a place disadvantaged pupils want to come to.

Motivation

Motivation can be defined as the incentives that initiate and sustain activities that lead to particular goals. The task of the classroom teacher is to create conditions that produce incentives. In other words, the classroom teacher must make the student want to learn. Pupils may want to learn something in order to satisfy a particular need. This has been discussed so often throughout this series, that it is only mentioned here to relate it to motivation. Pupils may even be motivated to please someone else. The point is, learning is goal directed and pupils must want to reach the goals.

For culturally disadvantaged pupils, the goals of learning must be presented in terms they understand. Furthermore, the activities to reach these goals must be appropriate for them. Often, an activity to reach a goal is satisfying in itself, and it gives reinforcement to continue toward the goal. The first task of the classroom teacher in motivating

culturally disadvantaged pupils is to understand the pupils in order to determine the goals that will produce incentive. Sometimes, the pupils themselves can offer goals. Then the teacher can organize activities to reach the goals. When goals are prescribed, as the overall education objectives are, the teacher must select the content and material that arouse interest in the pupils and furnish the incentive to reach the predetermined goals. Motivation, then, is creating conditions that cause pupils to want to engage in particular activities for reaching goals. This is what learning is all about.

Younger children, including younger disadvantaged children, seem to be motivated by their immaturity to learn. In other words, their lack of knowledge seems to propel them to acquire more learning. As they grow older, however, they lose this "natural" incentive. They become apathetic and negative toward learning--they can't be motivated. Their resistance to motivation may partly be explained by their consistent past failures. Some of the pupils may have experienced failure so often that they refuse to participate in learning activities that might produce further failure. Thus, even if goals are attractive for these pupils, the incentive that must be generated to reach these goals is smothered by expectations of failure. Sometimes, teachers contribute to the expectations of failure by letting the pupils know that the teacher feels they are incapable of learning.

Part of the motivation problem with culturally disadvantaged pupils is to convince them that they can learn. This can be done by creating a success cycle. Some activities can be structured so that the pupils experience success. Success in activities is a necessary quality to sustain motivation.

Incentives toward successful achievement (motivation) may be either extrinsic (lying outside the pupil) or intrinsic (lying inside the pupil). Examples of extrinsic motivation are vocational goals, prestige and status goals, striving for good grades, and learning to please the teacher; examples of intrinsic motivation are pride felt in achievement, strengthening of self-confidence and self-concept, learning to satisfy individual interests. Most psychologists believe that intrinsic motivation is better because it is more potent, durable, and it yields greater learning. Intrinsic motivation, however, is more difficult to achieve with culturally disadvantaged pupils. Extrinsic motivation is often easier to achieve with these pupils. Thus, if disadvantaged pupils can be motivated to achieve by wanting to please the teacher, or from strong identification with the teacher, or to get a reward (grades, praise, stars, etc.), then the teacher should capitalize on these. After all, the problem is to get the pupils learning. Once they become accustomed to experiencing success through learning, intrinsic motivation can develop.

Classroom Procedures

Lessons planned for culturally disadvantaged pupils must have a built-in flexibility. That is, if the pupils show particular interest in an activity or topic, the teacher should continue with it and get as much mileage out of it as possible; conversely, if the pupils show little interest, change the activity or topic. Interest determines attention span. The usually short attention span of culturally disadvantaged pupils can be increased by presenting lessons that deal with things that interest them.

Other factors that affect interest span are radical changes in weather, departure from the regular school routine, and events outside the classroom that make the pupils excited. All pupils are affected by these factors, but culturally disadvantaged pupils seem to be more affected. Thus, lesson plans should be made to take account of such factors.

Culturally disadvantaged pupils perform best and feel secure when the overall routine of lessons is maintained. Teachers should establish this routine early in the semester, and pupils should know that lessons will have a familiar pattern. Teachers can change topics, materials, and activity, but radical or frequent departures from an established pattern cause troubles.

Culturally disadvantaged pupils must be given clear simple directions when assignments are made. Directions should be written on the chalkboard in easy-to-follow steps, and the directions should be repeated until most pupils understand them. The pupils who don't understand directions even after they are repeated should get individual attention after the rest of the class gets started.

Always allow for plenty of time when making lesson plans. Slowness is one of the characteristics of the learning style of disadvantaged pupils. Close supervision during working periods of the lesson discourages them from wasting time. In addition, disadvantaged pupils require constant encouragement to finish an assignment. Positive encouragement will work much more effectively than beratings pertaining to their slowness.

Most assignments of lessons should be planned so that the pupils can finish them during one period. If assignments are carried over to the following day, much time is used repeating the directions and getting the pupils started again. Also, the high absence rate of disadvantaged pupils prevents many of them from finishing carried-over assignments.

Methods of teaching culturally disadvantaged pupils have been presented throughout this series. In short, that's what the series is all about--teaching culturally disadvantaged pupils. Certain methods, however, do not work well with these pupils, and some of these methods should be mentioned because teachers fall into the trap of using them, or these methods are recommended without considering the special case of the disadvantaged.

For example, the difficulties of conducting classroom discussion have already been mentioned. Classroom discussions must often be structured to go through the teacher until the pupils learn the procedures for holding discussion.

An unsuitable method often used in classrooms is similar to the recitation method of teaching used back in the days of colonial colleges: the pupils read a textbook, they try to memorize information in the textbook, and then they try to reproduce the information orally or in writing. This method of teaching is not very effective with any kind of pupils, and it is particularly ineffective with culturally disadvantaged pupils. First of all, the pupils must be highly motivated by the information in the text and most textbooks are not very interesting to culturally disadvantaged pupils. Secondly, pupils must read, interpret, and understand information without the help of a mediator. Thirdly, disadvantaged pupils are usually limited in their verbal ability and the recitation method depends entirely on a verbal presentation of the material to be learned in language that is almost foreign to many disadvantaged pupils. Furthermore, evidence of learning is determined from the verbal responses of the pupils. Finally, the most severe shortcoming of this method is that it is an abstract approach contrary to the concrete approach that is consistent with the learning style of disadvantaged pupils. Unfortunately, the recitation method is too often used with disadvantaged pupils by teachers who are marking time or by teachers unwilling to make the extra efforts required to teach disadvantaged pupils.

Another method that is ineffective for disadvantaged pupils is the lecture method. This method also uses a verbal approach--it requires the pupils to just listen to words--it is completely nonphysical; it requires speed of interpretation; and it requires focused attention on abstractions. These requirements for learning from the lecture method are contrary to the learning style of disadvantaged pupils.

The committee method of teaching so popular with teacher-training instructors is another method that is usually ineffective for culturally disadvantaged pupils--especially if the classroom is a heterogeneous group. Working harmoniously with others in an intellectual task is simply not a part of disadvantaged pupils' backgrounds. Committee work requires a high level of cooperation, and work must be done in a democratic spirit. Disadvantaged pupils are inclined to form groups that are totalitarian in structure, and the strong rule the weak. Physical prowess, rather than intellectual leadership, tells what is to be done and who is to do the "telling." Disagreements or courses of actions of the committees are likely to be influenced by a threat of a punch in the mouth after school or, regrettably, a punch delivered during committee "deliberations." Because disadvantaged pupils lack the intellectual and social skills for effective committee operation, their committees often end up at one or the other extreme: either they are an inactive, uninterested collection of pupils, or they are a brawling, disruptive mob. Of course, after proper preparation and long practice on working in committees given step by step, disadvantaged pupils can learn to work in committees. This is a difficult thing to achieve, because the committee method of teaching is bucking the background of cultural deprivation.

Discipline

Discipline is one of the major concerns of classroom teachers. Many teachers become so occupied with the question of discipline, that it becomes an end in itself. Some investigators have estimated that as much as 50 to 80 percent of classroom time is devoted to discipline or methods of controlling and coercing pupils. This is far too much time to devote to any one aspect of teaching, even a fundamental aspect like discipline. Teachers should always remember that discipline is interrelated with all other activities as means to one end--and that end is achievement.

The term "discipline" has many meanings, all of which apply to the classroom situation. One definition of discipline is that "it is the imposition of external standards and controls on individual conduct." Standards and controls are necessary in order for children to become socialized; otherwise, they would grow up without guidance, unprepared to live with others. External standards and controls are also necessary so that children can grow to them--in other words, they learn what adult behavior is. Finally, children are more emotionally secure when they are aware of controls. Ideally, external controls are eased as children grow older and develop self-discipline.

The problem with culturally disadvantaged pupils is that many basic standards and controls are often lacking in their homes, or they (their standards and controls) are different from those of a middle-class culture. When they get to school and meet the standards and controls of a middle-class culture, they rebel. But many of these are necessary in order for learning to take place. Thus, classroom teachers must take an arbitrary stand on these. This does not mean that teachers enforce discipline with an iron hand; it does mean that standards and controls are set, and the reasons for them are related to learning. Frank Riessman stated in an address delivered at the seventeenth annual California Advisory Council on Educational Research, November 12, 1965:

> Everything the teacher says and does in the classroom should be related to learning. He should repeat over and over and over again: "I am here to teach and you are here to learn." This should be expressed in the teacher's every action and should be related to every rule and value. Thus, all rules related to punctuality, aggression, etc., should be strictly oriented toward their usefulness in relation to learning. We can't conduct a class if children fight, come late, walk around, etc.

Riessman's statement implies that the pupils must understand the importance of education. The statement is a good general guide for classroom discipline.

Discipline can also mean the amount of order in a classroom. The importance of physical order has been pointed out; it is also important that pupils understand the importance of orderly deportment. Here again, its importance to learning should be made clear.

One of the primary requirements for good discipline is a good instructional program. Pupils are likely to behave themselves if the instructional program is interesting for them and gives them valuable learning experiences. Perhaps the reason for greater discipline problems with disadvantaged pupils is due to an instructional program that is not very meaningful to them.

Some specific suggestions on discipline for teachers of culturally disadvantaged pupils are listed below.

1. Disadvantaged pupils seem to respond better in a classroom atmosphere that is highly structured--more of a traditional approach than a permissive approach should be used to control them. However, methods must not be unreasonable or overly strict.

2. Never use sarcasm to correct behavior. It sometimes gets immediate results, but it ruins chances for future rapport.

3. Don't use negative admonitions constantly. Disadvantaged pupils need positive encouragement constantly.

4. Never make damaging remarks or use punishments that may hurt their self-concepts; teachers should heal rather than further wound self-concept.

5. Don't make a "big deal" out of little unimportant incidents. For example, if a pupil cusses at another pupil during a moment of anger don't give the pupil a lecture on the evils of cussing. Also, don't make a moral case out of fighting. Cussing and fighting are patterns derived from a disadvantaged background and preaching won't break these patterns. Instead of pontificating, as teachers often do, it's better to tell the pupils to "shut up" or bust up the fight. Then get the pupils moving on to their main task--learning. Disadvantaged pupils must be very amused--or confused--about the time, energy, and moralizing teachers spend on many of the unimportant things that pop up in the classroom.

6. Don't ask individuals to tell on each other. This is contrary to their value system, and it may even be dangerous to the informer.

7. Don't punish the entire class for the actions of one individual. The innocent decide that they get punished anyway, so in the future they, too, disobey.

8. Never back a disadvantaged pupil into a corner. There's only one way he knows to get out of a corner, and that is to fight--either verbally or physically. Many teachers who have been cussed or punched brought it on themselves by pressing an issue beyond the retaliation threshold of a disadvantaged pupil or the pupil was backed into a corner.

9. Never use physical force--except when it is necessary (and the district allows it). Physical force is the usual way these pupils are controlled at home, and often it is the only way to get them to respond. Physical force, however, should be used in only the most extreme cases--and never with high school students.

10. Always be consistent in discipline procedures.

11. Make a few rules and strictly enforce them, rather than make many rules that become so great in number and complicated that they block the main task of teaching.

Discipline really results from an understanding of culturally disadvantaged pupils applied with common sense. Finally, teachers must remember that effective discipline procedures will depend on their compatibility with the operant value system of disadvantaged pupils. Thus, an understanding of these pupils is essential to good discipline procedures.

Human Relations

A part of good discipline is good human relations--the two can't be separated. Discipline implies control and order, but control and order must be within a framework where each individual is respected and renders respect. To put it simply, human relations is respect and the sustaining of that mutual respect in a social situation.

Human relations is important in any classroom, especially in a classroom of culturally disadvantaged pupils. These pupils often feel that they have been rejected by society, and they feel that they do not have the respect of people in the dominant culture. Their continuing deprivation reinforces their feelings. In addition, many disadvantaged pupils are members of minority groups and their membership in these minority groups has given them experiences with racial prejudice. Thus, the teacher of culturally disadvantaged pupils should first establish that each pupil is an individual to be respected. If the pupils are members of a minority group, the teacher must also establish his lack of racial prejudice.

Some of the ways that teachers can communicate respect to pupils have been mentioned in previous units. For example, taking time out to talk individually to pupils, showing a genuine interest in pupils and their problems, refraining from disparaging remarks about the pupils, and just treating the pupils as human beings are simple ways to transmit a feeling of respect. Making a sincere effort to teach pupils is, perhaps, the most effective means of transmitting respect. Proving the lack of racial prejudice is probably dependent on what the teacher does not say or do more than what the teacher does say or do. For example, telling a group of Negro pupils "Some of my best friends are Negroes" (or a similar statement) or telling a group of Mexican-American pupils "Mexican-American babies are

so cute, I just love them!" are ways to arouse the suspicion of the pupils. The adage about protesting too loudly in order to hide something has been reinforced in the area of racial prejudice too many times for minority pupils. Instead, teachers should let their actions show that they are not prejudiced. Actions do speak louder than words in this case, and minority pupils are much more practiced at detecting prejudice than teachers are in trying to explain a lack of it or hide it. The best way to prove the lack of racial prejudice is to be one's self--to use common sense and follow suggestions for good human relations. This, of course, assumes a lack of prejudice. If a teacher is prejudiced, then he shouldn't teach minority pupils. Contact with minority pupils is likely to reinforce the prejudiced teacher's attitudes rather than change them, because the prejudiced person usually sees only what he is looking for.

Teachers of minority pupils should also learn the names and labels minority group members find offensive. The common offensive labels of minority groups are well known; however, there are other offensive labels that teachers can use inadvertently. For example, Negro pupils object to being referred to as "You people" or "your kind"; Appalachian pupils sometimes object to the term "hillbilly"; even the label "Puerto Rican" can be offensive to some Puerto Rican pupils (some prefer Hispanos). Culturally disadvantaged pupils even object to the term "culturally disadvantaged"! In general, minority groups object to those labels that have a connotation of group deprivation.

Teachers may not be aware of all the group labels that offend minority pupils. Teachers are aware of individual personal names, and the pupils' personal names, rather than nicknames, should be used whether the disadvantaged pupils are Negro, Mexican-American, Appalachian, Puerto Rican, or American Indian. Often, persons of the dominant culture use a nickname to indicate warmth and friendliness. Many disadvantaged pupils, however, interpret the use of nicknames as an attempt to downgrade them. Maybe their names are all they have as an identity label that holds dignity. If a pupil's name is James, call him James, not Jim; if his name is William, don't call him Bill. A personal name is the primary identification label of an individual, and to change it or dilute it to a nickname is to dilute that person's dignity. Of course, nicknames can be used after the teacher knows a pupil and establishes a warm relationship with him. The point is, never use a nickname during the initial stages of an acquaintance. Make sure the pupil's permission is granted, either explicitly or by implication, before using it.

Another gesture that persons of the dominant culture often make to communicate positive feelings for another person, particularly a young person, is to touch the person while talking over some difficulty (usually, the gesture is laying the friendly hand on the younger person's shoulder). Many culturally disadvantaged pupils don't interpret the friendly hand on the shoulder during a talk over some difficulty as a positive gesture. Instead, they interpret it in an opposite way. Touching a person during a stress period is interpreted by many disadvantaged pupils as aggression, and they usually meet aggression with aggression. Thus, the friendly hand

can sometimes backfire: disadvantaged pupils make an interpretation of this gesture consistent with their experiences. Thus, it is best not to lay a hand on them during stress periods even if the hand is supposed to communicate a willingness to solve the problem in a way that is beneficial to the pupil. This is another example of "culture clash."

Teachers should also avoid communicating a "better than thou" attitude. In other words, the best way to get pupils to adopt certain behaviors or do something in a certain way is not to contrast their way with the teacher's way in terms that make their way inferior. Some teachers constantly remind disadvantaged pupils that they are inferior because they don't act like the teacher or persons in the dominant culture. If reminded long enough of their inferiority, disadvantaged pupils will give up trying to adopt dominant cultural patterns. Teachers should always point out the advantages of adopting a particular pattern without making the pupils feel that their patterns are inferior. For example, teachers should never "knock" the nonstandard language of disadvantaged pupils. Instead, teachers should accept the pupils' language and recognize that their language system works in particular situations. The advantages of standard English should be pointed out to the pupils in the situations where it has the advantage--the time or situation when a particular pattern or way of doing something is important and it should be made clear. This is a much different approach than telling the pupils that their language system is inferior and the teacher's language system is better than theirs.

Human relations is really putting into practice the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"--if you were culturally disadvantaged can, perhaps, be added in this context. With increased understanding of culturally disadvantaged pupils, teachers will know how to "do unto them."

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT POINTS

1. The school should concentrate on influencing disadvantaged parents in those areas that directly affect the classroom achievement of their children.

2. Parents of culturally disadvantaged pupils are culturally disadvantaged. The description of the pupils fits the parents, also.

3. The number and concentration of culturally disadvantaged pupils has increased, and this has placed more emphasis on programs for them.

4. Most programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils are two types: compensatory education, and education programs that use the pupils' background as a take-off point for learning (instruction uses content, methods, and material appropriate to the pupils' backgrounds).

5. Programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils must aim for the overall objectives of the curriculum.

6. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 pertains to the education of pupils from low income families. Title I authorizes $1,060,000,000 to finance programs for these pupils.

7. Programs designed for culturally disadvantaged pupils must consider changes in structure and approach.

8. Programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils must not adjust them to their deprivation.

9. Classrooms should be made as pleasant as possible for culturally disadvantaged pupils.

10. Lesson plans for teaching culturally disadvantaged pupils must have a built-in flexibility.

11. Effective discipline procedures depend on their compatibility with the operant value system of culturally disadvantaged pupils.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are culturally disadvantaged pupils' chances for achievement increased if their parents are involved in school activities? What are some ways to involve disadvantaged parents in school activities?

2. Discuss ways the PTA can be made more attractive to disadvantaged parents.

3. What kind of report card could best report pupil progress to disadvantaged parents?

4. Discuss ways ESEA Title I funds can be used in your school or district to educate culturally disadvantaged pupils.

5. Examine a few programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils in your school or district and determine if the emphasis is on compensatory education or content, methods, and materials appropriate to the pupils' background (in terms of the distinction presented in Part III).

6. Examine a few programs for culturally disadvantaged pupils in your school or district and determine if these programs are likely to help culturally disadvantaged pupils attain the overall objectives of education of the district.

7. Discuss the importance of diagnosis before instruction. What other ways can be used for diagnosis?

8. What other methods of instruction are ineffective with culturally disadvantaged pupils? Why?

9. What are other suggestions on discipline that can be added to the list of suggestions presented in Part IV?

10. Discuss ways human relations can be improved.

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